WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1   1.   A method for obtaining a postage stamp at a kiosk, comprising a

2   computer system and a printer, said method comprising:

3   inputting by a user into said kiosk a request for said postage stamp;

4   sending said request to a server via a communications network;

5   receiving from said server a markup language response;

6   processing said markup language response to obtain an indicium, said

7   indicium comprising a digital signature; and

8   printing said indicium by said printer on a label to obtain said postage stamp.

1   2.   The method of claim 1 wherein said markup language response

2   comprises a logical structure having customizable constraints.

1   3.   The method of claim 2 wherein said customizable constraints include a

2   Document Type Declaration (DTD).

1   4.   The method of claim 1 further comprising validating said markup

2   language request using a response markup language declaration.

1   5.   The method of claim 4 wherein said markup language response

2   declaration is an element type declaration in a Document Type Declaration (DTD).

1   6.   The method of claim 1 wherein said markup language response is an

2   extensible markup language (XML) response.

1   7.   The method of claim 1 wherein said markup language response

2   comprises a statement of a markup language selected from a group consisting of HTML,

3   XML, or SGML.

1   8.   The method of claim 1 wherein said markup language response is a

2   Standard Generalized Markup Language (SGML) response.

1   9.   The method of claim 1 wherein said markup language response

2   includes a transaction identifier (TID).

1   10.   The method of claim 1 wherein when said printer is printing said

2   indicium on a label, displaying a moving image on a display.

1 11. The method of claim 1 wherein when said printer is printing said

2 indicium on said label, displaying an image on a display.

1 12. A method for obtaining a postage stamp at a kiosk, comprising a

2 computer system and a printer, said method comprising:

3 inputting by a user into said kiosk a request for said postage stamp and

4 payment information;

5 sending said request and said payment information to a server via a

6 communications network;

7 receiving from said server an XML response;

8 processing said XML response to obtain an indicium, said indicium

9 comprising a digital signature; and

10 printing said indicium by said printer on a label to obtain said postage stamp,

11 said label comprising one or more security features.

1 13. The method of claim 12 further comprising:

2 said server receiving a XML request comprising said request and said payment

3 information;

4 processing said XML request to obtain said request and said payment

5 information;

6 validating said payment information; and

7 responsive to said validating, generating said indicium based on said request.

1 14. The method of claim 13 wherein said XML request further includes a

2 GXG postage type.

1 15. The method of claim 13 wherein said XML request further includes a

2 customer transaction identifier (CTID).

1 16. An electronic kiosk for a user obtaining a postage stamp from a central

2 server via a communications network, said electronic kiosk comprising:

3 a processor operating on software stored in a memory, said software

4 comprising a markup language processor for reading a markup language document

5 comprising an indicium;

6 a housing having said display, said processor, and said memory;

7   network interface circuitry (NIC) connecting said processor to said

8 communications network, said NIC for receiving said markup language document; and

9   a printer coupled to said memory for printing said stamp using said indicium.

1   17. The electronic kiosk of claim 16 wherein said markup language

2 document is an XML document.

1   18. The electronic kiosk of claim 16 further comprising a display showing

2 a browser window for postage stamps.

1   19. The electronic kiosk of claim 16 wherein said software further

2 comprises a browser module and an ID module that validates a first kiosk ID at the kiosk

3 with a second kiosk ID at said central server.

1   20. The electronic kiosk of claim 19 wherein said first kiosk ID is stored in

2 a window's registry.

1   21. The electronic kiosk of claim 19 wherein said first kiosk ID is a MAC

2 address of said NIC.

1   22. A method for obtaining a postage stamp at a kiosk, comprising a

2 processor, a magnetic card reader, a touch screen display, and a printer, said method

3 comprising:

    receiving a request for said postage stamp via said touch screen display;

5   receiving payment information from said magnetic card reader;

6   forming an XML request comprising said request and said payment

7 information

8   sending said XML request to a server via a communications network;

9   said server validating said XML request using a request DTD;

10   processing said XML request to obtain said request and said payment

11 information;

12   validating said payment information;

13   responsive to said validating, generating an indicium based on said request;

14 said indicium including a digital signature;

15   forming an XML response comprising said indicium;

16   receiving from said server said XML response;

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17	validating said XML response using a response DTD ;
18	processing said XML response to obtain said indicium; and
19	printing said indicium by said printer on a label, said label comprising security
20	features.

1   23.   The method of claim 22 wherein when said printer is printing said
2 indicium on said label, displaying a portion of a video clip on said touch screen display.

1   24.   The method of claim 22 wherein when said printer is printing said
2 indicium on said label, displaying an image on said touch screen display.

1   25.   A method of obtaining a postage stamp from a kiosk, said kiosk
2 comprising a processor and a printer, said method comprising:
3   obtaining a sequence of characters upon paying for said postage stamp at a
4 cash register;
5   inputting said sequence of characters into said kiosk;
6   sending a XML request for said postage stamp to a server;
7   receiving a XML response comprising an indicium; and
8   printing said indicium, by said printer on a pre-processed label to obtain said
9 postage stamp.

1   26.   The method of claim 18 wherein said pre-processed label includes one
2 or more security features.

1   27.   A computer program product stored in a computer readable medium
2 for obtaining a postage stamp at a kiosk, said kiosk, comprising a computer system and a
3 printer, said computer program product comprising:
4   code for receiving a request for said postage stamp;
5   code for sending said request to a server via a communications network;
6   code for receiving from said server a markup language response;
7   code for processing said markup language response using a markup language
8 response declaration to obtain an indicium representing said postage stamp, said indicium
9 comprising a digital signature; and
10   code for printing said indicium by said printer on a label.

1   28.   The method of claim 27 wherein said markup language response is an

2   extensible markup language (XML) response.